## Thomas Francis Meagher, 'The Immortal Irishman'

BY DAVID TARRANT

THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS

**IMMORTAL** "THE IRISHMAN: The Irish Revolutionary Who Became an American Hero" by Timothy Egan; Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (384 pages, \$28)

Green beer aside, the most appropriate way to celebrate St. Patrick's Day would be to learn more about one of Ireland's greatest exports, Thomas Francis Meagher.

And there's no better way to do that than by reading this stirring and magnificent biography by Timothy Egan, "The Revolutionary Who Became ernment was the real culprit. an American Hero.'

Few people have lived a life as full of ac-**BOOK** tion and ad-**REVIEW** venture as

Meagher. Even fewer have willingly embraced a destiny of heroism and tragedy in equal measure.

Meagher came of age in desperate times. In the late 1840s, Ireland was in its death throes, wracked by the Great Famine. At least 1 million starved to death and another 2 million fled the island, mostly

The immediate cause of the famine was a potato blight. But

The Catholics of Ireland were ruled by a landowning Protestant aristocracy, whose allegiance was to England and not to their welfare. Though Catholics made up 80 percent of the population, they remained in indentured servitude on great estates owned by absentee landlords.

The horrifying truth of the Great Famine was that Ireland was producing enough grain crops to feed its population. But Irish grain was a money crop set aside for export.

Guided by the orthodox principles of a laissez-faire market, the English govern-

Immortal Irishman: The Irish a malignant, feudal-style gov-ment chose not to change the tools: oratorical skills matched the war's bloodiest battles. status quo. Nothing, not even the prospect of mass starvation, would keep that grain in Ireland.

> Meagher, himself, was not poor, his father and grandfather having made money as businessmen in Canada before returning to Ireland. Not content with his comfortable life, Meagher railed against the English for doing nothing to help the starving Irish. In soaring oratory, he argued that only liberation could help the Irish, a belief considered traitorous to the English

As a hero, Meagher came equipped with all the right

by stubborn courage, ruddy good looks and a quixotic dream to liberate Ireland.

When Meagher tried to organize a revolt against the English, he was quickly betrayed and exiled to a penal colony in Tasmania, on the other side of the world.

How Meagher escapes to a hero's welcome in New York, where he nurses his dream to liberate Ireland, makes up several more chapters of this galloping narrative.

It is a dream deferred by the outbreak of the Civil War, and Meagher ends up leading a brigade of Irish immigrants through several of

Egan is a Pulitzer Prizewinning reporter and New York Times columnist, who has written seven books, including The Worst Hard Time, which won a National Book Award. He brings a strong personal connection to the subject. His ancestors were born in County Waterford, where Meagher grew up.

Egan combines deep reporting with masterful storytelling to chronicle this bigger-than-life figure. In the last chapter, he uses his reporting skills to bring new evidence to explain how Meagher died, which has always been surrounded by mystery.

## Things to Do

ALTON - St. Patrick's Day Irish feast, 5-7 p.m. Thursday, March 17, Alton Methodist Church, 3494 Bennoch Road. Corned beef, cabbage, potato, turnip, carrots, beverage and dessert. \$8 per person. 394-

BANGOR - Contra dance with music by Sassafras Stomp and Dugan Murphy calling, Friday, March 18, Unitarian Universalist Church, 120 Park St. Beginner session, 7:30 p.m.; dance, 8 p.m. \$8 per person. 941-9727, bangorcontra.org or bangorcontra@gmail.

BANGOR - International Association of Firefighters Local 772 Chili and Chowder Cook-off, 6-8 p.m. Saturday, March 19, Hollywood Casino, 500 Main St. Benefits Muscular Dystrophy Association of Maine. Enjoy chilis and chowders prepared by area chefs. Cook-off entry fee: \$20 individuals; \$40 professionals. Facebook or IAFF772.org.

BANGOR - Irish Night at the Grange, supper only, 5 p.m., and supper and show, 6 p.m., Saturday, March 19, Bangor

Grange Hall, 1192 Ohio St. Boiled dinner followed by Irish and folk music by Halfway Home. Supper only is \$8; supper and show, \$14: show only 7 p.m. 973-

BLUE HILL — St. Patrick's Day corned beef and cabbage dinner, 5:30 p.m. Thursday, March 17, First Congregational Church of Blue Hill, 22 Tenney Hill. Vegetarian option. Irish entertainment in Jonathan Fisher Hall. Children's activities and child care provided. Space limited, so firstcome first-served. Adults \$7; children \$4. 374-2891 or bhcongo@ yahoo.com.

BLUE HILL — Blue Hill Bach celebration of J.S. Bach's 331st birthday and Early Music Month, all-Bach concert featuring Bangor organist Kevin Birch, 7:30-9 p.m. Friday, March 18, St. Francis by the Sea Episcopal Church, 330 Hinckley Ridge Road. Also, mezzo-soprano Marcia Gronewold Sly, violinists Heidi Powell and Richard Hsu. Afterconcert birthday cake with the musicians. 613-5454, info@bluehillbach. org or bluehillbach.org.

BREWER - Singer Kristyn Murphy and Abbie

Stands performing preview of their new show, "Lovers and Monsters. 7:30 p.m. Friday, March 18, Next Generation Theatre, 39 Center St. \$15. Tickets available at loversandmonsters.com or theater box office, 989-7100.

EDDINGTON - Free Zumba class, 6 p.m. Thursday, March 17, Back Door Dance Studio, 34 Lois Lane. Bring a friend. Swingtime34@ gmail.com.

MACHIAS - Free community supper featuring corned beef and traditional boiled-dinner fixins, 5:30-7 p.m. Saturday, March 19, Centre Street Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, 9 Centre St. Includes variety of desserts. Open to all. 255-

PORTLAND - Maine Jewish Film Festival, 1-8 p.m. Friday, March 18, Portland Museum of Art, 7 Congress Square. 523-3422, filmfest@mjff.org or mjff.org/tickets/.

PORTLAND - Men with moustaches get loose on stage at the ninth annual Stache Pag, 7-9:30 p.m. Friday, March 18, Portland House of Music, 25 Temple St. "Facial Hairaoke" new this year. eventbrite.com/e/stachepag-2016-tickets-19332486989?aff=es2.

PORTLAND - Holy Grounds Coffee House presenting Chasing the Light, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Saturday, March 19, Church of the Holy Spirit, 1047 Congress St. Opening act, Broken 51. Doors open 6 p.m. No cover charge; donations for musicians appreciated. Reserve table at facebook.com/holygroundsportland. 632-1167 or chsportland@gmail. com.

PORTLAND - Women United Around the World's seventh annual International Fashion Show and Gala in celebration of International Women's Day, 6-10 p.m. Saturday, March 19, Italian Heritage Center, 40 Westland Ave. Theme is Pledge for Parity. New Mainers will model traditional outfits inspired by their homelands. International cultural performances, silent auction, sneak peek at local designers Adele Ngoy's and Janet Andoh's 2016 collec-

ROCKLAND - Friends of Rockland Public Library

ance book sale, 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, March 19, Community Room at the library. Friends of Rockland Library preview, 8-8:30 a.m. Join the Friends or renew membership at the door. Bake sale, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., library lobby. friendsofrocklandpubliclibrary@ amail.com.

ROCKLAND - Vietnam's The Moving Wall fundraiser dance with Blind Albert Band, 7-10 p.m. Saturday, March 19, Elks Lodge, 210 Rankin St. Silent auction, 50/50 raffle, cash bar. \$10 at the door. All proceeds, except Elks' cash bar, will help to bring The Moving Wall to Knox Museum May 26-30 in Thomaston. 354-8062 or info@knoxmuseum. org.

SOUTHWEST HARBOR -Play games, 9:30-11 a.m. Saturday, March 19, Southwest Harbor Public Library. Includes chess, backgammon, Chinese checkers, dominoes, pick-up-sticks, puzzles and other games. Children must be accompanied by an adult. 244-7065.

SOUTHWEST HARBOR St. Patrick's Day tea, 2-3:30 p.m. Thurs-

west Harbor Public Library. Music by Ruth Grierson and friends. "Passion for Acadia" art show on exhibit. 244-7065.

UNION - Book art session, 2 p.m. Saturday, March 19, Vose Library, 392 Common Road. Bring a book or choose from books library will have available. Class limited to 6. Advance registration advised. 785-4733.

UNITY - Waldo County trio Tremolino concert, 7 p.m. Friday, March 18, Crosstrax Restaurant, Depot Street. Benefits FUTURE RSU 3's multipurpose "Mustang Stable" building with concession and bathroom facilities for Mount View athletic fields. Food available for purchase; wine tasting. Donations accepted at the door.

WATERVILLE - Maine Jewish Film Festival: "Once in a Lifetime," 7-9 p.m. Thursday, March 17, Railroad Square Cinema, 17 Railroad Square. 523-3422 or filmfest@mjff.

For a complete listing of calendar items or to submit your event, visit www.ban-

## Madawaska native presented with Canadian music award

BY DON ENO ST. JOHN VALLEY TIMES

MADAWASKA — Canada's music education charity, MusiCounts, has named a Madawaska native the recipient of its 2016 Teacher of the Year Award.

Don Bosse, 57, originally from Madawaska but now a music teacher at Fredericton High School in Fredericton, New Brunswick, was presented the award last week in Toronto.

Members of iconic Canadian rock band Rush — Geddy Lee and Alex Lifeson — surprised Bosse, who is a fan of the group, with the award.

The band, members of the Canadian Music Hall of Fame, joined forces with MusiCounts as the sole sponsor of this year's award, which recognizes teachers for their outstanding dedication to the musical growth of Canadian youths.

Bosse has been teaching at Fredericton High School for

During the surprise presentation to Bosse, Lee and Lifeson spoke about the reasons they chose to support this award, according to a news release issued March 14 by MusiCounts.

"When everything you have in life has come from the fountain of music, you want to spread that around and you want to encourage others," Lee said.

Bosse will receive \$10,000, and another \$10,000 contribution will be made to his school's music program as part of the award.

In addition, he will be attending the JUNO Awards, presented to the best Canadian musical artists and bands by the Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, later this month in Calgary, Alberta.

The experience of receiving the MusiCounts Teacher of the Year award from Musi-



COURTESY OF BARRY RODEN

Geddy Lee (left) and Alex Lifeson (right) of the band Rush, with Don Bosse.

amazing. It is a day I will never forget," Bosse said in the release. "The award means a lot because it validates the importance of what we do as music educators and teachers and the positive impact we have in the lives of our students.'

The son of Dora and the late Fernand Bosse of Madawaska, Don Bosse has been head of the fine arts department at Fredericton High School for the last 20 years. He has demonstrated his passion for music and teaching by incorporating technology into his Orchestra Award.

Counts and Rush was truly music lessons to assist students with learning difficulties and to challenge those who have advanced skills, according to the MusiCounts release.

> Also, with the help of a sizeable provincial grant several years ago, he was able to create a recording studio and develop a course option at his school called, Recording & Sound De-

> In addition, in March of last year, Bosse was presented with the 2015 Lieutenant-Governor's New Brunswick Youth

SHOW

takes credit for his wife's ubiquitous artwork. (PG-13) ardized by a tip. MA

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